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# THE CONDOR

An Illustrated Magazine  
of Western Ornithology

Published Bi-Monthly by the Cooper Ornithological Club of California.

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## EDITORIALS

In the vote to establish certain usages in our magazine, twenty-three Cooper Club members responded, with the following results:

By a vote of 18 to 5 we are *not* to use the metric system *exclusively* in THE CONDOR. We will use whichever system authors of articles prefer. A wise suggestion is that in technical accounts, the metric system be employed, but English equivalents given in parenthesis. No one would then be inconvenienced.

By a vote of 16 to 7 we are to continue to use the simplified spelling in its authoritatively recommended moderation.

By a vote of 12 to 11 we are hereafter to begin with capitals all vernacular names of birds in the body of sentences, as well as in lists. This is the only change from our previous custom. Mr. Dawson's presentation of this subject in our last issue, leaves us convinced of the correctness of his views, and we are now glad the vote decided the matter in that way.

We want to make THE CONDOR an attractive magazine in general typographical make-up, as well as from a scientific and popular standpoint, and to that end we will welcome relevant suggestions from anyone.

The present editor is sorry he cannot see his way to adding a juvenile or school department to this magazine as has been urged from several directions on this coast. We really do not see the expediency of such a move. *Bird-Lore* is filling the educational field admirably; why should we compete with it? And, too, we do not believe it would meet the approval of

anywhere near a majority of Cooper Club members.

It has been our conviction that we should conduct a medium for the publication of serious ornithology, not necessarily technical, however. We believe nothing at all should be published anywhere, that is so obscurely couched as to be incomprehensible to the average reader. The most important fact and profound philosophy *should* be stated "popularly," in the sense of being clearly worded, with an elimination of unusual terms.

On the other hand we abhor that style of article in which one must search for the germ of information within a frothy mass of inconsequential chatter, as is the characteristic of so much of our "Nature" literature nowadays. We do not believe our mission to be to furnish "light reading" for people who are not interested enough to care for real bird-study.

The Washington Audubon Society was organized at Seattle, the 20th of April, with W. Leon Dawson as President, and H. Rief as Secretary.

Contrary to our contention in our last November issue that the "House Finch" is universally called "Linnet," Mr. E. R. Warren tells us that in Colorado 99 out of every 100 persons familiar with "House Finches" never heard of "Linnets"! However, we feel quite sure that the latter name prevails over the largest part of the bird's range.

Walter P. Taylor is spending the summer in natural history field-work along the Colorado River near Searchlight.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### BAIRD'S OR BAIRD?

Editors of THE CONDOR:

It will be small compliment to the reader, I fear, if I confess in advance that I have not freshly reviewed the discussion upon the mooted point of the possessive or adjectival form of bird names. But perhaps I shall succeed in stating the case freshly, if for no other reason than that no account has been taken of the excellent matter already published.

The trouble is that contention has been made for the use of pronominal adjective *or* possessive, whereas, in truth, both have proper uses. And this failure to grasp the validity of both forms is due chiefly to a failure in distinguishing between a bird as an individual and a bird as a species or a member of a species.

Take for example *Centronyx bairdii* (Aud.), called since its dedication in 1843 Baird's Sparrow. Now the contention is made that Spencer F. Baird—quite apart from the fact that he is dead—had no possessive right in certain sparrows flocking and summering in Dakota, and that, therefore, it is incorrect to speak of